


**Minutes of the Corporation Board meeting held on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> February 2022 at 5pm in the Burslem Boardroom and via Microsoft Teams**

Present:	Jeremy Cartwright, Chair (in person) David Boughey, Governor (in person) Sue Blake, Governor (via Teams) David Rogers, Governor (in person) Tom Nadin, Governor (via Teams) Steve Sawbridge, Governor (in person) Rob Fisher, Governor (in person) Sibgha Amin, Governor (via Teams) Andy McKay, Governor (in person) Lisa Capper, Principal and CEO (in person) Dave Hopley, Business Support Staff Governor (via Teams) Lyndsey Cherry, Academic Staff Governor (in person)		
In Attendance:	Maxine Bagshaw, Clerk to the Corporation (via Teams) Nova Abela, Chief HR Officer (via Teams) Janet Cannon, Interim Deputy Principal (via Teams)		
<b>Min. No.</b>		<b>Action By Whom</b>	<b>Action By When</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b>		
	The Chair reminded everyone again to declare any interests that they may have on matters to be discussed. Standing declarations were noted.		
<b>2</b>	<b>WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b>		
	Lyndsey Cherry was welcomed to her first Board meeting as the new Academic Staff Governor.  Apologies for absence were received from Jo Mountney, Nikki Brady, Antoinette Lythgoe, Todd Abel-White and Shannon Mansfield.		
<b>3</b>	<b>MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 17<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2021 AND 20<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2022</b>		
	The minutes were reviewed and it was agreed that they were		

Signed :  Chair  
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	<p>an accurate record of discussions.</p> <p>AGREED: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on the 17<sup>th</sup> December 2021 and 20<sup>th</sup> January 2022.</p> <p>There were no matters arising.</p>		
<b>4</b>	<b>ACTION PROGRESS REPORT</b>		
	<p>Verbal updates on the Action Progress Report were given in relation to line 1, 3, 6 and 12:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Line 1 – the Principal said that the Strategic Plan was due to launch last summer, so she wanted to take the opportunity to check what the Board’s appetite was for this, as well as putting forward some thoughts on how the College might tie this in with the marketing work that Strategi are carrying out for the College around the brand and how the College can use this as an opportunity to promote the College. The Chair of the Board agreed and said that it should be launched at an appropriate point and be used as part of the College’s engagement with the City and region. The Principal advised that she would prepare a proposal and this can be discussed further at the next Board meeting.</li> <li>Line 3 – the Principal informed the Board that she could not find any evidence of any agreements with Staffordshire and Keele University and believes that this was an idea rather than anything tangible that has been setup. She said that, bearing in mind the stage the country is at in the pandemic, this piece of work is too far in the past and put forward two proposals to deal with this. The first was in relation to Ofsted, as the College needs to provide Ofsted with a position statement saying what the College did in lockdown, how the College served the learners, academically and practically, as well as in terms of pastoral and provide evidence of this such as attendance and state what impact this had and how the College has taken the learners through a journey. The Principal said that this is something the College needs to produce and it will give a nice record for the Board on how this was managed by the College, what the impact was and what the College is doing now. The second idea was to do something more creative with learners in terms of a literacy project – the learners can send letters to their future selves about where they are now and how they progressed on their journey and then have a gallery of these imaginings of young people on how they envisage themselves in 5 years’ time and what it was like being in lockdown, explaining it to someone else. The Principal said that this will give a creative insight about</li> </ul>	Principal	20.5.2022

	<p>learner’s aspirations for the future but linked to Covid and the College will also have a more factual based evidence piece that the College has to produce for Ofsted, which can be shared with the Board to document everything the College did in the pandemic. The Principal added that, if the Board wanted to do the research project with Staffordshire and Keele University, then she is happy to take advice and guidance on this. The Chair of the Board said that this action came out of the Ofsted visit that looked at how the College performed during Covid and Ofsted spoke highly of what was going on at the College, which linked to some of the work the students were doing and feedback from students. He said that the action was an opportunity to bring this up to date. The Principal said that the College can capture the evidence and story in the position statement for Ofsted and then the College has this as a record. She said that she is happy to look at the aspirational piece re coming out of Covid and this can be tied into literacy skills too. The Business Support Staff Governor said that the College’s response to Covid was recognised through lots of forums, so it is important that this is pulled together so that it can be used with external stakeholders. It was agreed that a Covid package would be pulled together for the next Board meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Line 6 – the Principal asked for clarity around this action. The Chair of the Board said that the issue at the time was that the Board was being provided with separate documents at separate times and there was a request to see them together. He said that, at the previous Governor away day, the Board got a sense of vision and the Executive team were tasked with going away and creating the enabling strategies; however, these were being produced piecemeal, so the action was to pull these documents together to ensure they are not repeating each other. The Principal said that she plans to map these strategies and update them ready for the next phase, recording how they relate to each other and where commonalities are. She said that they need to come together to create an overall cultural piece, which should mirror the strength to strength strategy. The Chair said that he would prefer the strategies to be one or two pages.</li> <li>• Line 12 – the Governor from the Staffordshire Chamber of Commerce said that the LSIPs are being rolled out across 8 different chambers across the country and 11 different areas. He said that, as an organisation, they are doing a bit of research to see how they are working in those different chambers, so that when it is rolled out nationally, the Chambers are ready as an organisation to hit the ground running. He said that he</li> </ul>	Principal	20.5.2022
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	<p>The areas students feel they are developing were as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Punctuality skills</li> <li>• Team working</li> <li>• Communication</li> <li>• Customer service/business skills</li> <li>• Leadership</li> <li>• Problem solving</li> <li>• Confidence</li> <li>• Being attentive</li> <li>• Typing and writing skills</li> <li>• Creativity</li> </ul> <p>Students are motivated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gaining qualifications</li> <li>• Finishing the course</li> <li>• Some had aspirations of going onto university</li> <li>• Some were motivated by future opportunities either getting a job or running their own business</li> </ul> <p>In terms of the maths and English feedback, the Executive Director of Student and Digital Services said that there would be more on this in next terms video; however, from this video, the students positively commented on the time spent in maths and English, particularly where they are gaining relevant skills in maths i.e. money management skills, gaining life skills.</p> <p>The Executive Director of Student and Digital Services said that there were a number of matters students would like to see improved, which are captured in the table provided in the report, together with the actions that are being taken. He said that some of the matters are very specific, so need to be passed onto individual groups, tutors or Heads of Learning to be addressed. He directed the Board to the table provided and advised that students would like to improvements in the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improvements in the Aspire e-learning modules – these are modules the students have to complete around topics such as fundamental British Values, Safeguarding, Prevent etc. The Executive Director of Student and Digital Services said that the College has used these resources, from the Blended Learning Consortium, for a couple of years and they are embedded onto Canvas for the learners. These are currently being re-designed for 2022/23 to make them more bespoke and interactive.</li> <li>• Consistency of discipline – this has been passed onto the relevant manager as it is a specific issue.</li> <li>• Clarity of expectations of work set on Canvas – the Executive Director of Student and Digital Services said that this was linked to the work on the Digital Strategy and the work that is being done in Quality in pushing</li> </ul>		
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up the standard of work on Canvas. He said that there are bronze, silver and gold schemes across the College to make sure the learning on Canvas is well organised and structured. He said that this particular issue will be looked at by a particular group but assured the Board that the College is working hard on Canvas.

- Time management on the course – this has been passed onto the relevant curriculum area. The Executive Director of Student and Digital Services said that the College is aware that, owing to Covid self-isolation rules, the organisation of term 1 was impacted by making sure that students got through their course and making sure they were getting the right balance of theory and practical.
- More modern cars in the workshop – this feedback has been passed to the relevant curriculum area to look at with the supplier who provides the College with free vehicles to work on.

One Governor asked if the students who spoke on the video were volunteers. The Executive Director of Student and Digital Services said that they were randomly selected students who were pulled out of activities to provide a view on their experience at the College. The students were advised that the College was looking for honest feedback. Another Governor asked if the Executive Director of Student and Digital Services was triangulating all of the information from the Course Representative meetings, Learner Voice conference etc. The Executive Director of Student and Digital Services said that he Chairs a Learner Involvement Strategy group that meets each term and pulls together all of the feedback onto the Quality portal including minutes from the Course Representative meetings, 'you said, we did' action plans etc. These documents are all pulled together centrally so that they can be looked at in one place to triangulate all feedback and make sure all actions are picked up.

#### Learner Voice

The Executive Director of Student and Digital Services directed Governors to the report provided. In terms of enrichment, this is tracked through the academic year to look at enrichment participation in different areas. He advised that it is optional for students to engage in enrichment. He said that 30% of all study programme learners are engaged in enrichment clubs/societies; of this, 4 students engaged in enrichment 2% above the College average in terms of retention. The Executive Director of Student and Digital Services said that one of the Student Governors has been asked by the Chair of the Board to carry out a survey with those learners who don't engage in enrichment. The Student Governor has met with the Learner Involvement Co-ordinator and the Executive Director of

<p>Student and Digital Services to discuss an approach for this and it has been agreed that the Student Governor will drill down into the enrichment report to find groups that have low or no engagement in enrichment. The Student Governor and the Learner Involvement Co-ordinate will then go into these groups to talk to learners about why they are not involved in enrichment, sign-post some enrichment clubs and societies and pull together some reasons why learners aren't engaging and then look to put together some bespoke offers to use as a way of getting more enrichment participation. The Executive Director of Student and Digital Services said that this will be done after the February half term and he should be able to provide an update on this for the Board meeting in May 2022.</p> <p>In terms of the QDP survey results, from the induction survey 92% of learners agreed that the College offers a good programme of enrichment, which is excellent when comparing benchmarks to similar colleges. The Executive Director of Student and Digital Services said that this is one of the College's greatest strengths.</p> <p>The Executive Director of Student and Digital Services proceeded to give an update on the Big Tutorial that took place week commencing the 24<sup>th</sup> January 2022 at both campuses. The tutorial was delivered by theatre group, Alterego, around topics of sexism, sexual harassment and sexual violence, which is a hot topic at the moment and an Ofsted priority. All study programme groups took part in this. He advised that the College also recorded some sessions and streamed live as, at the time, the College was having to operate on a reduced capacity face to face due to Covid restrictions. The Executive Director of Student and Digital Services said that the tutorials went well and were thought provoking, resulting in learners speaking to staff and the Safeguarding team to talk about things that resonated with them or even to make referrals.</p> <p>The Executive Director of Student and Digital Services went on to share some good news with the Board that the College has been shortlisted for a national award by the National Association of Managers of Student Services for the best student led initiative or campaign for the peer mentor initiative. The College finds out how it has done in March; however, the Executive Director of Student and Digital Services said that, regardless of whether the College wins or not, this is fantastic recognition for the work that the peer mentors do in supporting their peers' learners at College.</p> <p>In terms of the Challenge programme, the Executive Director of Student and Digital Services said that Challenge Stoke will be a particular focus during this academic year and will mainly focus on homelessness. The College did a step challenge which</p>	<p>Student Governor / Executive Director of Student and Digital Services</p>	<p>May 2022</p>
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raised over £500 and the next fundraising event is the big sleep out which will take place on the 25<sup>th</sup> March at Bet365 in order to raise awareness of homelessness, as well as being a fundraising opportunity. The College is working with Stoke City Community Trust on this. The Executive Director of Student and Digital Services said that the College will be commencing work on the Challenge UK programme, with the first event being Challenge Manchester in March. He said that the College's international visits are still on hold at the moment owing to difficulties around travel restrictions due to Covid.

The Executive Director of Student and Digital Services directed the Board to the 'you said, we did' tracker, which provides an update on the actions put forward from the Student Council and Learner Voice conference.

One Governor asked what the percentages on enrichment were like pre-Covid. The Executive Director of Student and Digital Services said that the percentages were broadly similar for this time of year. He said that, normally, by the end of the academic year, the College has 64% of learners engaged in enrichment and typically 13% higher on retention. He said that, at this point in the academic year, 30% engagement is good but the College will continue to push on this. He added that the work that the Student Governor and the Learner Involvement Co-ordinator will do will help. Also, at the Learner Voice conference, they are looking for new ideas for new enrichment clubs, so a lot of this is learner owned and the College is aware of the good impact on students when they engage in wider College life beyond their course.

The Academic Staff Governor said that, on the back of the remembrance event in November 2021, the Assistant Principal Curriculum Design and Delivery has asked her to lead up a community occasion programme in line with the enrichment programme. This will be a programme for learners to be involved in activities that are to do with the community or things that impact on the community. She said that there will be 6 main topics - remembrance, homelessness, pride, family, reflection and religion. She said that the idea of the task force is to bring in learners who will volunteer to be a part of those events. The Academic Staff Governor continued by saying that many of the students who were involved in the remembrance service weren't the usual learners who get involved in enrichment, they were learners who felt a passion in it or wanted to get involved. She said that this will help the enrichment programme in terms of supporting learners, bringing the community in and using the College as a community base. She said that it will help learners to go further in terms of what they are getting involved in and bringing out other groups of learners who aren't normally involved/engaged.



	<p>The Chair asked if the peer mentor programme was unique for the College. The Executive Director of Student and Digital Services said that other colleges do similar things but the success of the College is the number of students who are engaged with it and how much momentum has been built around this, particularly in terms of the additional skills and qualifications the College has provided i.e. additional training around Safeguarding, Prevent, mental health etc. He said that the College is unique in terms of how well established the forum is and the momentum that has been built with a group of passionate learners. He added that other colleges do similar things but they are a lot more staff led, whereas the College's is learner led. The Chair asked how sustainable the current learner team is, bearing in mind them moving on in their own journey's. The Executive Director of Student and Digital Services said that the College has a good cohort which is made up of first years, some of which are looking to stay at the College, some students who have progressed from last year and some who have been with the College for three years. He said that they are always getting new people into the established team, which gives good sustainability.</p> <p>AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.</p>		
<b>6</b>	<b>PRINCIPAL/CEO'S REPORT</b>		
	<p>The Principal introduced her presentation to the Board. She advised that this is her first impressions on where the College is at right now.</p> <p><u>Reasons to be proud</u></p> <p>The Principal said that there are many reasons to be proud of the College. She said that she can see where developments and improvements have been made.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Values: Safeguarding and welfare culture – the Principal said that values is something that she spoke to staff about when she carried out her initial staff briefings. She said that there is a strong welfare culture, which is a strength of the College and Safeguarding is sitting strongly behind this.</li> <li>• Achievement rates 2020/21: over 80% SP 90% adult – the Principal said that the College is sitting on a good back story of achievement around progress made by individual students, as learners are starting from low points in some cohorts, so the achievement rates do stand up and progress is being made.</li> <li>• Covid response - the Principal said that the College's Covid response has been well executed and people are still talking about this.</li> <li>• Ofsted monitor visit: 1 significant progress, 2 reasonable – the Principal said that the Ofsted</li> </ul>		

monitoring visit was positive; however, there is still work to do but the College is going in the right direction.

- Partnerships: NSEG, BT, Michelin, Opportunity Area - the Principal said that she has been looking at what partnerships the College has and working with employers. She said that there could be more partnerships but the ones the College has are working well. She added that there is a lot of potential to be exploited through the Commercial team and the ways that have worked well can be emulated in other areas of the curriculum.
- Culture: SUMO, work/life balance, breakfasts – the Principal said that the HR team have been working on this, including the SUMO work, picking up on engagement from the last staff survey, the sense of work/life balance and free breakfasts.
- Financial health: good – the Principal said that the College has also got good financial health

The Principal commented that the above are reasons to be proud and are a good starting points.

#### Areas for improvement

- Retention was weak last year 16-18's – this was below the national average; however, in year, it is looking better and the College is working on learners who may not have been taken off registers but have left to make sure that retention is as strong as it can be. The Principal said that how the College is using all this welfare and learner engagement work to drive attendance and retention is a real opportunity.
- Attendance and English and maths – the Principal said that English and maths attendance is lagging, although the gap has partially closed, so the College has made progress.
- Weaker curriculum areas – the Principal said that Apprenticeships is still an issue, as identified by Ofsted but there is a clear resource and action plan on clearing the issues and getting this focused.
- Adult recruitment and retention – the Principal said that this is one of the areas that the College is focusing on in terms of financial health, as the College is below target for this at the moment. She said that the College has put in the mid-year funding claim estimates of where the College should be by the end of the year and had an adult summit meeting this week to look at new planning for the next period in order to boost the number of adult learners.
- Consistency in/across English and maths and Tuition fund catch up – the Principal said that the Tuition fund catch up is approximately £400k, which the College

	<p>needs to use appropriately. She said that the College has got a funded post in place, which will help with achievement and retention.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mental health and wellbeing of learners – the Principal said that the College needs to keep an eye on this, as some learners are still struggling coming out of Covid and the impact it has had on them. She said that the Executive Director of Student and Digital Services is focussed on this.</li> <li>• Curriculum planning – the Principal said that this is an improving area. She said that the previous Deputy Principal kicked off a new process for curriculum planning, but this was not completed. She said that the College is now trying to get this more outward facing, based more on where the demand is, where the learners are coming from, has the College got the curriculum right and are the employers happy with the curriculum. She said that the College is getting this more outward facing through discussions/processes</li> <li>• Reputation, Marketing and Communication – on the agenda to be discussed</li> <li>• Estates – Transformation Fund and T Levels – the Principal said that there will need to be discussions on how we use the funds, if we are successful, to improve the estate and make the College more appealing to learners and employers.</li> </ul> <p><u>Risks</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capacity and accountability – the Principal said that this was in relation to her predecessor and Deputy Principal leaving. She said that the Deputy Principal's replacement is only available 2-3 days per week but not every week due to inspection commitments; therefore, there is a plan to fill this gap with another interim Deputy Principal, so that the Principal and the two interim Deputy Principal's can focus on quality and curriculum</li> <li>• Funding audit on Apprenticeships – the Principal said that there is good progress on this and this will be discussed during the confidential section of the meeting.</li> <li>• Ofsted preparation – the Principal said that this is key, as the College has not had a formal visit for some time. She said that the Quality team is focussed on the preparation that is needed to run a full inspection from admin and the organisation side. She said that the College also has clear positions on all key judgement areas, cohorts and particular strands i.e. Safeguarding, Careers, Work Experience and subcontracting. She said that these are all being produced and brought up to date along with the Covid piece mentioned earlier.</li> <li>• £200k Apprenticeship target – the Principal said that,</li> </ul>		
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	<p>within the Apprenticeship portfolio, the College still has a budget of an additional £200k to earn on Apprenticeships, which it has not yet earned in this financial year. She said that the College is looking at this in some detail to ensure this is achieved in year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Curriculum planning, new cycle – the Principal re-confirmed that there is a new cycle for curriculum planning, which the College needs to make sure is executed and there is capacity to pull this off.</li> <li>• ESFA annual conversation/FE Commissioner visit review – the Principal said that this risk is just about giving assurance that the College is managing these risks and that the College is in a stable position.</li> </ul> <p><u>Actions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interim Deputy Principal 2/3 days per week – already discussed</li> <li>• Apprenticeship solutions, audit, commercial and employers – the Principal said that there have been a lot of staff changes in Apprenticeships; however, there is a solution in place which will take effect after the February half term, which has some longevity. She said that the College has also got someone in to do the 'leg work' around the legacy issues, which are around the funding audit but it is also about having really strong systems and practices in place in terms of how things are recorded and monitored.</li> <li>• Curriculum planning stage 1 completed, stage 2 due the first week in March and then the College refines this and takes forward for a further review in April 2022, by which time the College will have a clearer view on enrolment numbers.</li> <li>• The Principal advised that the College met with the AoC, who are collected data in MIDES, which can help the College to benchmark against other colleges. She said that, now the College has got this report, it will be brought to the Curriculum, Quality &amp; Standards Committee so that Governors can see where the College is benchmarked.</li> <li>• Tuition fund post and plan rapid and targeted delivery – the Principal reiterated that the Tuition fund post is funded through the Tuition fund, as it is difficult for current staff to keep doing more and, although the money has been used to fund additional posts, it is the co-ordination and management of this, as this is auditable, so it is important that the College has a record of progress of learners.</li> <li>• Development of internal communications plan and Marketing strategy – the Principal said that the College met with Strategi this week. She said that she has already started in terms of putting some pieces in place around internal communications to raise the profile of</li> </ul>	Principal	14.3.2022
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	<p>this.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ofsted piece is in hand</li> <li>• Executive team development – Mayvin and Insight work for senior post holders – the Principal said that the College is looking to use up the Mayvin coaching capacity with the Executive team around the new formation of the senior team and how this works together.</li> <li>• Culture and engagement piece – the Principal said that the Chief HR Officer is focussed on taking the next steps on the culture and engagement piece and the College is looking at how to management a staff survey and the timing of this, particularly in relation to Ofsted.</li> <li>• Staff briefings x 2, good feedback – the Principal advised the Board that she carried out two staff briefings at each campus in her second week at the College where she talked about the vision of the College being the City Technical College for Stoke on Trent. She advised that she received good feedback from this.</li> </ul> <p><u>Data and KPI update</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mid-year funding claim – the Principal directed the Board to the data on a page pack included in the papers. She said that it is difficult to see the achievement rates for those learners that are rolling on and off; however, attendance is below target, which is a KPI, so the College is focussed on this. She said that the College also seems to have a high retention rate, which potentially suggests that there are leavers that haven't been taken off, as the College also has a high pass rate. She said that MIS are currently interrogating this data and the College is working on some important, smaller cohorts such as High Needs, where Covid is still impacting on attendance due to nervousness and ill health.</li> <li>• The Principal said that there is good news on Apprenticeships, as the in-year achievement is looking good. She said that what the College is doing with Apprenticeships, in most areas, is good but there are some legacy issues that are hampering data and there are some curriculum areas where the College needs to do better. She said that the College is learning about the employer relationship piece and how important this is, so she wants to take this learning and develop it further.</li> <li>• In terms of the mid-year claim, the Principal said that the College will get this over the threshold, so there will be no clawback. The College is predicted approximately 98% based on current plans. She reiterated that the College held an adult summit meeting this week, so the plans are being refined and this will then be looked at</li> </ul>		
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again; however, this is a good estimate of where the College is at.

#### Highlights

- Shortlisted for a National Association for Managers of Student Services (NAMSS) award in the 'Best student-led initiative' category. Peer Mentors assist and support the wider community
- Support Stoke on Trent and Staffordshire Local Enterprise Partnership with some important research into Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance given to young people when considering their career pathways
- Published a report for the Opportunity Area fund on Transition work at year 11
- Great social media coverage in relation to National Apprenticeships week

#### External and Partnerships

- The Principal advised that she has attended the Opportunity Area Board and put forward the College to lead on the 16-19 aspect of the Opportunity fund. She said that this is now an education investment area, so this will continue.
- Jon Rouse, City Council CEO, visited the campus. He visited the Digital and Creative hub and was provided with a gourmet lunch by two learners, who are now finalists for the Nestle culinary arts competition. On the back of this visit, the Principal confirmed that she has put herself forward to be one of the founding members of Jon Rouse's new 14-25 strategy group at the City Council. She added that there are now also two members of staff on the Silicon Stoke Board, which the College was not part of previously.
- Connected with the Discover Digital Community Renewal Fund initiative and the College will be one of the digital hubs.
- The Principal and the Chair of the Audit Committee met with Councillor Evans, which was a positive visit about what opportunities there are for the College and the College has now also been invited to join the City Committee for Children and Young People
- The Principal has written to the three local MP's about the Skills for Job white paper, as well as taking the opportunity to ask them to shout about the College and a personal invitation to visit the College.
- The Principal has also joined the Collab group, who are doing work on higher level technical, which will help the College to prepare for this initiative, when the College is Ofsted Good.
- As part of the AoC's Principal's Briefing, the Principal has asked to be part of the consultation work around

	<p>the LSIP's in the East Midlands</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Benchmarking against other colleges session AoC</li> </ul> <p><u>Environment and sustainability</u></p> <p>The Principal informed the Board that, at the two staff briefings, she took the opportunity to do a soft launch in relation to the environment theme that was discussed at the previous Governor away day. She advised that the Chief Financial Officer has taken forward the setting up of the Steering Group and the College has put together a small programme of work between now and summer to get started. She said that there are things that the College has to do, such as Carbon Literacy training and raising awareness. She said that, at the Learner Voice conference, sustainability will be the next community challenge involving 12 young people who will 'spear head' the work on sustainability. In addition, one member of staff had made a link with Keele University and sent this link on the Executive office so that they can be involved in the College's project. She informed the Board that the College is already delivering distance learning courses on this subject.</p> <p><u>What's coming</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capital Transformation bids – two bids, one for each campus, which the College is expecting a response from in March 2022</li> <li>• Preparing T Level capital bids for two areas – Construction and Engineering at the Burslem campus and Health and Social Care at the Cauldon campus</li> <li>• Significant change to study programme funding, as the rate is going up and there is an increase in study programme hours. The College has done some analysis on what this means for the College, as this will be something that will be monitored and audited, so the College will need a staff increase and this will affect timetabling. The Principal said that there is currently a piece of work trying to scope this.</li> <li>• New accountability framework for adult and Apprenticeships that will come in on the back of the Skills for Jobs white paper</li> <li>• Levelling Up white paper published</li> </ul> <p><u>Levelling Up white paper</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6 areas that are covered and 12 missions.</li> <li>• The list of skills initiatives in this white paper the same as the Skills for Jobs white paper</li> <li>• Education Investment Areas – Stoke on Trent is one of them; however, it has not been made clear what funding is available yet. There is the potential of an elite sixth form being setup.</li> <li>• Adult Education Budget devolution – the Principal said that this is another part of the Levelling Up white</li> </ul>		
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	<p>paper.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shared Prosperity Fund – the Principal said that this will be given to the City Council to decide how this money is spent. She said that the College needs to think about what it is the College wants to put forward.</li> </ul> <p>Following the presentation, one Governor questioned about the preparation for Ofsted and whether there was any consideration being given to redeploying the 3-tier team. The Principal said that this has already been done, as the CPD Lead who supports the Director of Quality, is good at organisation, so the College now has a 24-hour planner, a 14-hour planner and templates in place. There is also a one-hour Ofsted Board meeting in place, which checks in every two weeks involving a number of key people. The Governor asked about staff with inspection experience. The Principal said that the interim Deputy Principal is involved and has inspection experience. The Governor commented that the external partnerships piece is very impressive.</p> <p>The Chair of the Board said that there are a lot of deep themes that need further discussion that will be discussed at the re-scheduled second Governor Strategy day.</p> <p>The Academic Staff Governor said that, from a curriculum staff point of view, staff came away from the Principal briefing feeling excited and, in terms of the curriculum planned, the staff are feeling very involved in the process, which is a positive. One Governor commented that she was delighted with what was presented by the Principal, as it has captured where the College is at and the challenges still to face. Another Governor commented that the external and partnership work is nice to see and it is good to see the Principal and the College represented at meetings he had attended.</p> <p>AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.</p>	Clerk	April 2022
<b>7</b>	<b>MARKETING AND BRANDING UPDATE</b>		
	<p>(Rob Fisher left the meeting for this item)</p> <p>It was agreed that the minutes for this item would be recorded confidentially.</p>		
<b>8</b>	<b>DIGITAL STRATEGY – IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS</b>		
	<p>(Rob Fisher returned to the meeting)</p> <p>The Executive Director of Student and Digital Services provided a verbal update to the Board and confirmed that a more detailed written report would be presented to the Transformation, Finance &amp; Resources Committee at the end of</p>	Executive Director of	29.3.2022





	<p>College will be working to get more parents onto this course throughout the year.</p> <p>AGREED: to note the content of the update provided</p>		
<b>9</b>	<b>CHAIRS REPORT – GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE</b>		
	<p>The Chair of the Governance Committee directed the Board to his presentation. He advised that there was positive outcome from the one to one meetings the Chair of the Board had with all Governors. He said that there were no surprises and the topics raised were the ones discussed previously. He said that there was one item that the Governance Committee did explore further which was in relation to some bespoke training being offered to each Governor and making sure each person understands what this training opportunity entails. He said that more information will be circulated on this at a later date.</p> <p>The Committee Chair continued by saying that there have been a number of membership changes with the Board, so the College is going out to recruit. There are currently three applicants going through the process at the moment. With regards to Governor engagement sessions, the Committee Chair took the opportunity to encourage all Governors to attend. He added that the Governor training sessions topics for the 7<sup>th</sup> March have now been agreed.</p> <p>In terms of the medium term, the questionnaire on the back of the training will be going out soon and the planned date for the next Governor away day is the 25<sup>th</sup> April, although this is to be finalised. The Committee Chair said that the Governance Committee did consider the use of recruitment consultants if the vacancies on the Board continue. He added that the College has an opportunity for participation in Governor peer review with West Nottinghamshire College, which two of the Governors on the Board are currently undertaking.</p> <p>With regards to risks and issues, Ofsted’s view of Governance continues to be a risk, as well as ensuring compliance with the AoC code, ensuring high levels of Governor engagement and attendance and increasing the level of Governor engagement in student and staff meetings.</p> <p>One Governor asked for a single page of the engagement sessions to be sent out to him, so that he book onto any relevant sessions. Another Governor commented that she had seen Governor vacancies advertised in FE week, so it appears that other providers are also struggling with Governor recruitment. The Chair of the Board said that the three applicants are all internal recommendations but they have to go through the process; however, if this is successful, then it will be better financially for the College and the new Governors</p>	<p>Governance Executive Assistant</p>	<p>February 2022</p>

	<p>will have an in-built interest. The Principal said that the College has to be clear on the level of commitment and skills base.</p> <p>AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.</p>		
<b>10</b>	<b>CHAIRS REPORT – TRANSFORMATION, FINANCE &amp; RESOURCES COMMITTEE</b>		
	<p>The Committee Chair directed the Board to his slides and noted that the first order of business is the recommendation to close the Real Apprentices Limited company, as there has been no activity with this business for over two years. The Board approved this recommendation.</p> <p>In terms of the College’s 2020/21 year-end accounts, it was agreed that this item would be recorded under the confidential minutes. The Committee Chair mentioned the Apprenticeship provision and the current shortfall of £200k on planned activity. With regards to subcontracting, the Committee Chair said that the Transformation, Finance &amp; Resources Committee are recommending to Board the approval of three contracts plus an additional contract for Learning Curve. The Principal said that Learning Curve is for adult provision and will help the College to get over its 97% allocation, as this is critical to ensure the College does not get clawback. She said that it is difficult to recruit adults now due to Covid, low skilled jobs becoming available etc and the College is not getting referrals from the DWP, so the College is concerned that it may not meet the recruitment target for adults; therefore, the contract with Learning Curve is to mitigate this. She said that Learning Curve are a trendy, distance learning company who can get into areas that the College is not reaching. Learning Curve deliver some quick online courses for adults to get them back engaged into learning and to brush up on their English and maths and digital skills. The Principal added that Learning Curve will help the College to use up it’s allocation but will also help the College to reach a different audience, in different places in order to start to attract footfall to the College. She said that this is a neat solution to deal with the current adult recruitment issue. The Board approved the four contracts as presented.</p> <p>With regards to the December 2021 accounts, the Committee Chair said that there were two items of concern which were the pension projections and the energy costs. He added that a copy of the Gender Pay Gap report is provided, which links into the College’s Pay Strategy, the first phase of which was implemented in October 2021 and the second phase will be implemented last this year.</p> <p>In terms of the medium term, the Committee Chair said that</p>		

	<p>the J Block sale was continuing. The Principal added that there is a slight delay in the sale due to the PR activity around the neighbouring properties; however, it looks like things will proceed quickly and hopefully be finalised early next week.</p> <p>With regards to risks and issues, the Committee Chair said energy costs are a concern; however, the hope is that the relationship with the City Council and the District Heat Network will help to mitigate the severity of the energy price increase. The Principal confirmed that this was in progress. She added that both she and the Chief Financial Officer met with the bank to go through the changes to the forecast outturn with reference to the pension projections and energy costs, so they are up to date. She said that the covenants are still secure and the College has done a test on any issues that may come up and looked at the impacts and, at the moment, the College is fine. One Governor raised a point about the Sustainability Steering Group looking at energy and incorporating energy saving into the Sustainability Strategy i.e. switching off lights, not plugging in charged laptops. The Principal advised that she would feed this back to the Chief Financial Officer.</p> <p>AGREED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) to note the content of the update provided</li> <li>b) to approve the closure of Real Apprentices Limited with immediate effect</li> <li>c) to approve the four subcontracts, as presented</li> </ul>	Chief Financial Officer	May 2022
<b>11</b>	<b>RISK REGISTER AND BAF 2021/22</b>		
	<p>The Audit Committee Chair opened the discussion on this item and said that, at the last Audit Committee meeting, there was a discussion around approving the annual report around the management of risk in the organisation and this report was produced by the Chief Financial Officer following conversations with auditors and this was signed off at the meeting. He said that the Risk Register used to be pre-occupied with things that are not right or things that could go wrong, whereas now it is more weighted to strategic risks going forward, the College's ambitions and whether the College will fulfil those ambitions. He added that the format of the Risk Register is more accessible and easy to use and a heat map has been produced, which is good but could be better and will be put in as a regular feature. With regards to the Board Assurance Framework, the Audit Committee Chair said that this was specifically reviewed by RSM who said it was good. He said that RSM have an approach which looks at first, second and third level of assurance, which the College will be adopting. He said that there is a much higher level of strategic risk evaluation than the College has had before. The Principal commented that the Risk Register has been discussed and</p>		

	<p>looked at in more detail at Executive Board meetings, as well as at Senior Postholder meetings and it is beginning to be embedded into conversations. The Chair said that risk 2 says "The College does not improve its Apprenticeship provision to at least 'requires improvement' or ensure full compliance with ESFA funding guidance". He said that the phrase 'at least requires improvement' suggests that the College currently thinks the provision is inadequate and that requires improvement is good enough. The Principal said that she did not think the Register had been updated and, at the last Ofsted Monitoring visit, this provision was rated 'requires improvement', so this risk should read 'good' and will be updated for the next iteration. One Governor said that the whole Apprenticeship risk needs re-evaluating from a delivery and financial perspective.</p> <p>AGREED: to note the content of the update provided</p>	Chief Financial Officer	May 2022
<b>12</b>	<b>SUSTAINABILITY – ESTABLISHING A WORKING GROUP</b>		
	<p>Governors were directed to the cover report and Terms of Reference presented. One Governor commented that the Terms of Reference were unusual for a group that is an Executive Group in the College. The Principal said that the Chief Financial Officer had taken the Terms of Reference of the AoC's model of good practice, so it reflects what the AoC have put out typically for Terms of Reference to use. Another Governor asked if it was normal in Terms of Reference to quote current required tasks and activities to fulfil. He said that, if there are any changes, then do the Terms of Reference need to be changed each time. The Chair said that the Terms of Reference felt bureaucratic. He said that there is no action noted in the Terms of Reference and when coming away from the away day in January, the Board wanted the College to do something, so he expected to see words in the Terms of Reference such as 'champion', 'drive', 'initiate'. He added that he felt this was an opportunity, not just for the College to become carbon neutral, but for the College to become a place to deliver training for the green agenda and these Terms of Reference don't reflect this. The Principal said that this is noted in the embed and monitor line around sustainability in curriculum for all areas and relates to the delivery of green skills; however, agreed that they felt a little bureaucratic. Another Governor commented that the Terms of Reference need to be more than functional, they need to be cultural. The Principal said that the Terms of Reference will be reviewed and brought back to the next meeting with the right focus.</p> <p>AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.</p>	Chief Financial Officer	May 2022
<b>13</b>	<b>GOVERNANCE</b>		

	<p>The Clerk said that this item relates to two items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Closure of Real Apprentices Limited – which has been dealt with earlier in the meeting</li> <li>• Formal ratification of the written resolution requested on the 26<sup>th</sup> January 2022 in terms of three policies: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion; Health and Safety Policy Statement; Learner Safeguarding and Child Protection – all to do with Apprenticeships.</li> </ul> <p>AGREED: to approve the closure of Real Apprentices Limited and formally ratify the three policies approved via written resolution.</p>		
<b>14</b>	<b>COMMITTEE MINUTES</b>		
	The Board noted the minutes as presented.		
<b>15</b>	<b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b>		
	There were no items of additional business.		
<b>16</b>	<b>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</b>		
	<p>It was confirmed that the next meeting of the Board will take place on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> May 2022 at 8.30am.</p> <p>Meeting closed at 8.15pm</p>		

Signed : \_\_\_\_\_ Chair  
Corporation Board Minutes 17<sup>th</sup> February 2022  
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Date: